



## Ditch Day Hits Campus Last Friday

See Page 4-5



## Unfinished yearbooks are facing monetary issues

May lead to limited distribution

By Tina Ding  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The first Big T in four years is due to be published and released to undergraduates in September 2010, yet the yearbook's low budget may result in limited distribution. "We don't have the money to produce that many yearbooks right now," said ASCIT President Adam Khan.

All undergraduate students pay \$12 per term of Big T dues and are each subject to one copy of the Big T every year, according to the ASCIT bylaws. However, according to Director of Operations Brian Merlob and the Big T Editors, the cost of one issue- which is approximately \$55- exceeds the \$36 paid by each student.

Furthermore, the Big T hasn't been printed in the past three years. Its failure to launch has been attributed to a variety of reasons including lack of money

and lack of organization in pulling the project together, according to Khan and Big T co-Editor Stephanie Lai. "This is a problem we have inherited and are trying to deal with, but we don't have enough information," said Khan.

ASCIT's efforts have been directed towards not only producing the Big T for the current school year, but also at making up for the three year delinquency in publishing the Big T. A graphic designer was hired to layout the yearbook pages for the Big Ts of the past three years, with the photographs of activities and Houses of every year provided and the cover pages designed by Lai.

The distribution of these previous issues may be limited. Even though the Big T was not distributed in the last three years, the dues were still collected through Bursar. Currently, ASCIT plans to distribute each Big T to only its senior class, i.e. only the class of 2009 would receive the

2009 Big T.

"As it stands now, [previous Big T are] going out to seniors [of that year] only, but that's a problem to me because students pay dues for every year," said Khan. "Thus, we're meeting on Wed with Big T editors and Tom Mannion [who is now overseeing this project] to discuss this issue and perhaps change it."

The meeting will also focus on how to solve the problem of past three yearbooks and move on to this year. "We will find out what what really the reason [the Big T] didn't come out, looking at the budget, and moving to solve that," said Khan.

Under this current plan, the senior class that has so far not received any copies of the Big T due to the three year lag will get the least bang for their buck. They will have paid for four years, but will only receive year's copy. "I was looking forward

See BIG T on pg. 5

## A huge oil spill will make us greener?

By Sasha Souverneva  
STAFF WRITER

How do you stop a ruptured pipe from spewing at least 210,000 gallons of oil 5000 feet under the Gulf of Mexico? The spill in question started on April 20 with an explosion at the Deepwater Horizon rig. So far, at least 6 million gallons of oil have been poured into the ocean. British Petroleum (BP), the British oil company leasing the oil rig, has been attempting again and again to fix the catastrophe.

A 40-foot-tall steel chamber that was lowered on top of the leak, but the deep underwater environment was not hospitable to the giant oil cap, and the plan failed. Next, BP decided to pump hundreds of gallons of Corexit under the ocean to emulsify the oil from the leak. According to Dr. Jared Leadbetter, Associate Professor of Environmental Microbiology at Caltech, the makers of Corexit do not fully disclose the composition of their product, and thus it is not possible to accurately estimate the damage Corexit will have on the environment.

One of the main components

of Corexit is 2-butoxyethanol, a toxic chemical that is harmful to most of our organ systems. It causes birth defects and is linked to various autoimmune diseases, such as autism. "Are we just spreading industrial hazardous waste?" asked Professor Leadbetter. After BP poured the 655,000 gallons of Corexit into the ocean, the U.S. government ordered them to stop and choose a less toxic dispersant.

Instead, BP inserted a tube into the damaged oil well to collect a small fraction of the oil. Over a month after the accident, alarming amounts of oil are still spewing into the ocean. BP is now preparing for its next attempt to stop the leak-- the "top kill", which consists of engineers shooting heavy mud at the problem.

The environmental effects of upwards of six million gallons of oil in the Gulf of Mexico are nothing to sneeze at. Not only is oil difficult to swim in-- it also kills local animals and destroys habitats. Leadbetter pointed out that even when the oil decomposes, it causes damage by depleting the oxygen in the area and suffocating

See OIL SPILL on pg. 5

Ditch Day Stack Features page 4-5



### In This Issue

Academic integrity lacking  
Iran sanctions  
Book on crackpots

page 2  
page 2  
page 3



Ipaid page 3

## More vigilance is needed *Academic integrity is harder to find*

**Sarah Marzen**  
COPY EDITOR

Recently, a transfer student to Harvard named Adam Wheeler was indicted on counts of “larceny, identity fraud, falsifying an endorsement or approval, and pretending to hold a degree,” according to the Harvard Crimson. In other words, he faked basically everything on his resume besides his name. His faked resume was rather impressive (nearly perfect transcripts, stolen essays, fabricated recommendation letters, perfect SAT scores) especially when compared to reality: a 1220 SAT score and a transcript of A’s, B’s, and one D. During his two and a half years at Harvard, Wheeler managed to deceive Harvard out of a \$8,000 research grant and \$6,000 worth of English awards. (To see Wheeler’s resume dissected by the Harvard Crimson, please visit [http://www.thecrimson.com/media/pdf/WheelerResumeMark.](http://www.thecrimson.com/media/pdf/WheelerResumeMark.pdf)

pdf.) The story of how Wheeler was caught is amazing. He left Harvard his senior year after his Rhodes application raised questions of plagiarism, rather than face a disciplinary hearing. Then, he applied for an internship at McLean Hospital, but didn’t get past their security check. Finally, he applied to Yale as a transfer student. Yale called Wheeler’s parents to ask some questions about his application, and Wheeler’s parents forced him to admit that he had fabricated his extensive resume.

I’m surprised that it took so long to finally catch Wheeler. Sure, a clever guy can probably plagiarize a few obscure essays and win English awards. But how did he manage to claim to be a transfer from MIT on his application to Harvard, and somehow fake transcripts? After the Rhodes committee at Harvard discover mountains of evidence suggesting that he had cheated, why didn’t they stick the charges to him then? How is it that he can just refuse to attend a disciplinary hearing and worm his way out of disciplinary action?

In other words, thank goodness that Yale thought the application was fishy enough to call Wheeler’s parents, and thank goodness for Wheeler’s parents. Sometimes, the parents and/or institution stands up for the cheater. For example, at my incredibly competitive high school, a ring of students was caught cheating on just about every homework assignment. When their parents were told about their kids’ indiscretions, the parents allegedly got upset at the administrators for catching their

cheaters.

A scarier story comes from a rumor that snaked its way through the Intel Science Talent Search, one of the nation’s most prestigious high school science fairs. According to legend, one ISTS winner was caught copying data from someone else in his lab at SUNY, and was thereafter quietly expelled. Then, he was legitimately accepted as a Harvard transfer student.

That story scares me more than Adam Wheeler. In retrospect, I can sort of rationalize Wheeler’s cheating as the desperate attempts of a diligent, mediocre student to distinguish himself as an Einstein. Likewise, the students that cheated at my high school were typically bright, but not bright enough to be sure that they would get an A or get into an Ivy League school. I like to tell myself that the people that are mostly likely to cheat are the second-tier students who know that without the extra push, they can’t stack up to the first-tier students.

But this ISTS winner is likely far brighter than me, and he still felt compelled to cheat. It really drives home the point that really bright people will do pretty terrible things when are determined to reach unachievable goals. Even here.

As colleges go, Caltech has strong academic integrity, but we aren’t perfect. In order to avoid producing future cheaters, each one of us might have to make some pretty tough decisions. If your friend is cheating, and your pleas to stop fall on deaf ears, it might be time to stop protecting them in order to keep Caltech’s Honor Code clean and shiny.

## Something fishy about sanctions against Iran

**James Wu**  
STAFF WRITER

Turkey and Brazil recently negotiated a deal with Iran where Iran would send its nuclear fuel out of the country to be enriched for use by its medical research reactor. While the deal is very similar to the one the US offered Iran, the US and the rest of the permanent members of the UN Security Council are still pushing for punitive sanctions against Iran.

The recent agreement is almost exactly the same as the agreement that the US had earlier offered Iran. Earlier, the same amount of nuclear fuel would be sent to Russia to be enriched. While Iranian President Ahmadinejad had agreed to the US terms, he faced widespread opposition to the agreement within Iran. With the US refusing to agree to any sort of guarantee, such as providing a portion of the enriched fuel upfront, Iranian opposition to the nuclear swap prevented Ahmadinejad from signing it.

So why are the permanent members of the UN Security Council not accepting the new deal and halting further sanctions? One argument is that it’s given Iran a year to build up its stock of fuel. Considering that Iran is not a major producer of uranium, it seems unlikely it can quickly secretly

build up a large hidden stock of fuel. Another is that it doesn’t address the fundamental issue, that Iran is not a responsible stakeholder and should not be allowed to dabble with nuclear technology. Considering that Iran’s actions are perfectly legal under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation treaty, and the fact that the same fundamental issue underlined the deal the US offered, this argument falls flat as well.

This is causing people to assume that there never was intended to be a deal. Iran was offered a deal the world knew it could not accept, simply so that the failed deal could be used as support for a sanctions regime. So the question is, is Iran facing sanctions because of its nuclear program, or is its nuclear program simply an excuse for sanctions? If it’s the former, the permanent members of the UN Security Council should accept the new deal, and stop trying to push for further sanctions. Trying to both accept the new deal and support further sanctions, like what China and Russia are currently doing, is duplicitous and sends the message that sanctions will occur no matter what Iran does. Rejecting such a deal is a sign to Turkey, Brazil, and the rest of the nonpermanent members that the UN does not adequately represent the views of the world.

### The California Tech

Caltech 40-58, Pasadena, CA 91125  
advertising e-mail: [business@caltech.edu](mailto:business@caltech.edu)  
editorial e-mail: [tech@caltech.edu](mailto:tech@caltech.edu)

*Editor-in-Chief*  
Tina Ding

*Copy Editor*  
Sarah Marzen

*Layout Editor*  
Hanna Liu

*Sports Editor*  
Rick Paul

*Business Manager*  
Gabriel Mendoza

*Staff*  
Dannah Almasco  
ZeNan Chang  
Deboki Chakravarti  
Sandhya Chandrasekaran  
Edward Chen  
Daniel Erenrich  
Andrew Freddo  
Yang Hu  
Casey Jao  
Natalya Kostandova  
Rebecca Lawler  
Monorina Mukhopadhyay  
Pradeep Ramesh  
Neha Samdaria  
Gloria Tran  
James Wu  
Wesley Yu

*Circulation*  
Aryan Safaie

*Advisor*  
Tom Mannion

*The Tech* is published weekly except during vacation and examination periods by the Associated Students of the California Institute of Technology, Inc. The opinions expressed herein are strictly those of the authors and advertisers.

Letters and submissions are welcome; e-mail submissions to [tech@caltech.edu](mailto:tech@caltech.edu) as plain-text attachments, including the author’s name, by Friday of the week before publication. *The Tech* does accept anonymous contributions. The editors reserve the right to edit and abridge all submissions for any reason. All written work remains property of its author.

The advertising deadline is 5 PM Friday; all advertising should be submitted electronically or as camera-ready art, but *The Tech* can also do simple typesetting and arrangement. All advertising inquiries should be directed to the business manager at [business@caltech.edu](mailto:business@caltech.edu). For subscription information, please send mail to “Subscriptions.”

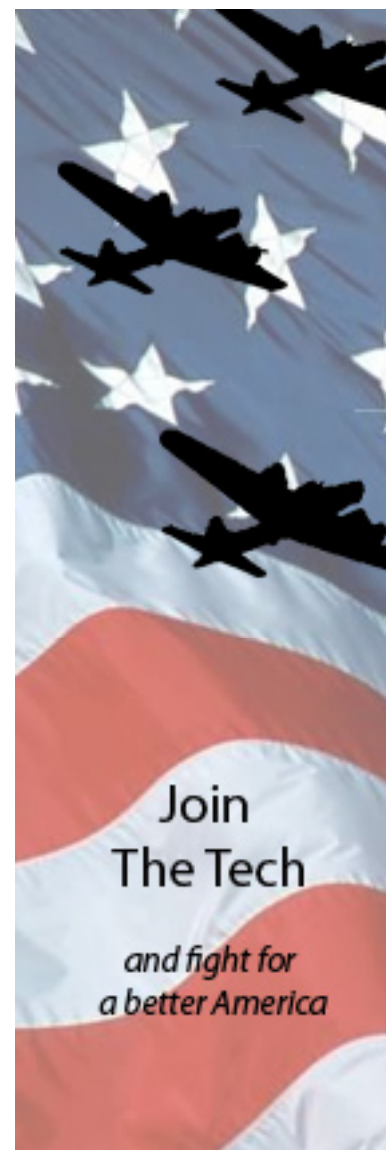
## Letter to the Editor

The person responsible for the Humor page of *The Tech* seriously needs to do a check-up for brain damage! (Yes, I know this is offensive, but It’s supposed to be a joke, and if you don’t get the joke then I would call you a nerd or something else that’s also offensive.)

I humbly request you to look back at the last few editions of the humor page and I hope you realize the pattern. But just in case you don’t, I would like to point out that a page consisting mostly of offensive (in most cases, sexist) and stereotypical remarks does not become less offensive just because you print the word “HUMOR” on top of the page or end an article saying “some people just can’t take a joke”.

And just for fun, I would like to hear Dr. Smart’s explanation as to why his latest insights on the lab performance and sense of humor of women should not be considered utterly tasteless.

Tanvir B.



# iPad: Mostly fantastic

by Brian Merlob



At first glance, the iPad seems to be a giant iPod and even worse, an Apple product. And it is. But that doesn't make it any less awesome!

While the iPad is certainly not a replacement for a laptop, some of what you do on your computer is just more intuitive and more fun on the iPad:

## Reading, Writing and Searching the Web

Overall, I've opted to use my iPad for all of my reading and most of my writing.

By far, reading is better on the iPad than on your laptop. The iPad is the perfect size and shape for reading. Some people find it a tad too heavy to hold for long amounts of time, but it's lighter than most of the books I read. A huge plus is that I've never experienced any eye strain with my iPad, but I have experienced a lot of eye strain with my computer.

Typing on the iPad is a little cumbersome at first—initially, you tend to avoid using heavy punctuation. But after three days or so, you start to pick up speed and can write any email that's not an essay in disguise. The autocorrect is a great tool to have, unless you're trying to spell "inter-house" or your professor's last name. But the iPad somehow remembers words that you repeatedly "misspell" and combined with experience, the annoyance quickly goes away.

Searching the web is also somehow more fun, mostly because of the touch screen. The user interface in general is fun to play with, but it isn't significantly different than the iPhone or iPod in that respect.

Switching between pages is intuitive enough, and everything I regularly do on the web can be done on the iPad.

## Entertainment

Watching movies, television shows, and Youtube are absolutely amazing on the iPad and I'm not quite sure why. Perhaps it's the crisp colors, the resolution, the contrast—but that's just a guess. The free ABC app lets me watch most of my TV shows, but the iPad notably does not have support for Flash, so there are some shows that I still have to watch on my computer.

Games are a mixed bag. The upside: there are a lot of cool games coming out for the iPad (in addition to all the ones already out for the iPhone.) The downside is that you have to buy them (or get a free trial version.) Labyrinth 2, one particularly popular game, uses the iPad's capabilities to their fullest and gives you a gaming experience that is significantly different than the experience from a console or in computer games.

The Photos and Maps applications are really cool to play around with, but I don't use them that much. Pandora has its own app, but you can't play it in the back-

ground, which is unfortunate. You can play the iPod in the background though.

## Battery Life, Portability

The battery life is excellent. Unless you plan to watch 11 straight hours of video and aren't near an outlet, the battery life will outlast your use each day. I generally charge my iPad every two to three days and only while I'm sleeping. Portability is also fantastic, and while it doesn't fit in my pocket, it's far more portable than a laptop, and I bring it wherever I go.

## Bad Things

There are a few things that the iPad can't handle.

(1) Wireless: If you get the wireless version, the Internet works everywhere on the Caltech campus, but if you walk from one building to the next, you have to reconnect (which can take up to 5 seconds!).

(2) Scrolling: Some websites have boxes that you should be able to scroll up/down or left/right on, but there is no easy mechanism for doing so on the iPad.

(3) Freezing: Although this doesn't happen to all iPads, the iPad tends to freeze during movies for me, which is rather annoying, but it remembers where I am in the movie after I reset the device, so I just pretend like it's a commercial.

(4) Security: You can set it so that it re-

quires a password upon waking up, but you have to weigh convenience against someone going through your photos or draining the battery playing games.

(5) Magazines: Some magazines have their own apps, but most require that you buy issues individually and are grossly overpriced. They'll probably improve over time.

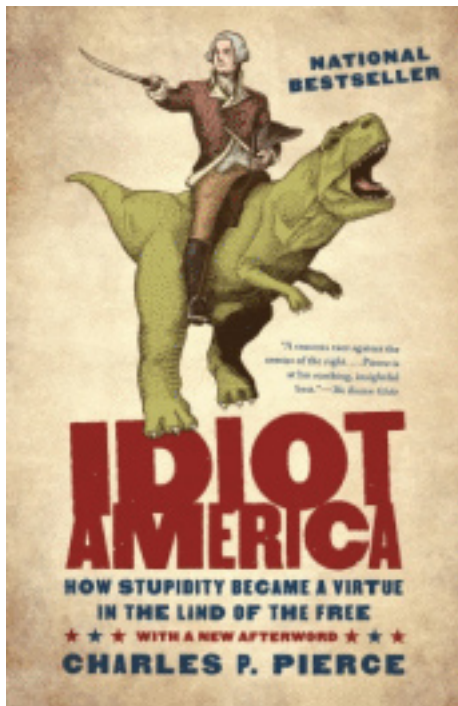
(6) Fingerprints: There are all over it. If you want the best viewing experience, you need to clean the screen every now and then (I usually clean it during commercials.)

(7) Saving Files: You can't download files, so if you want a pdf file from your computer, you need to (a) read it off of Google Docs/email, or (b) buy a \$3 app. I guess if you're going to put down \$500 for the device, an extra \$3 isn't much, but you could buy \$100 worth of \$1 apps with that frame of mind.

Overall, the iPad exceeded my expectations and was well worth the \$500 it cost, but I wouldn't recommend it for people who spend most of their time playing computer games. If you spend most of your time watching shows, exploring the Internet or reading, then you should seriously consider the iPad. It won't help you do anything new, but it will make your experience more enjoyable.

# It's a problem- cranks are now mainstream

by Evans Boney



Idiot America

Boston Globe columnist Charles Pierce presents an entertaining history of fools in Idiot America and offers intellectuals of the present day solace that the nation has always had its share of cranks. Not as pessimistic as it might be, Pierce presents a modern-day allegory of the modern neoconservative with past conspiracy-theory hawking cranks, arguing that the only difference is that they have now been incorporated into the mainstream.

The book epitomizes the crank through the "Prince of Cranks", Ignatius Donnelly, who is a 19th century version of today's anti-intellectual talk show radio host, spinning conspiracy theories and frequently proven false (but being forced to change course by a public that can recognize cranks.) The difference, Pierce humorously argues, is that people today assume there are two right sides to every issue... so every crank is automatically worth listening to. The value of the crank is that they push society to look for real conspiracies, which often rival conspiracy theories in their craziness. Or, as he put it, "The value of the crank is in the effort that it takes to refute what the crank is saying, or to assimilate it into the mainstream."

The Prince of Cranks never made an honest dollar. As he said in his diary in 1881, reported by Pierce, "It is so oftentimes in this world, that it is not the philosophy that is at fault, but the facts." He conned a man named Nininger into building a small local railroad town of the same name that failed within five years.

This didn't stop him from successfully becoming a congressman. When he couldn't reach the senate, he dropped out and (instead of a facebook page) started pseudoscience research on Atlantis, Ragnarok: Age of Fire and Gravel (about a comet that collided with Atlantis), who wrote Shakespeare's plays (Francis Bacon), and any number of smaller stretches of the imagination. The Prince, again in his own words: "I believe I am right. Or, if not right, at least plausible."

Interestingly, Pierce writes that "Don-

nelly didn't discover Atlantis off the coast of the Azores. He discovered Atlantis in this country of this mind, in the willingness of Americans to believe." And these days, suggests Pierce, Madison (his favorite founding father) would be very disappointed in what Americans believe. From JFK to evolution (I'm sure the recent news in Texas would pique his interest), Pierce suggests that the problem today is that the American crank is no longer marginalized, he is celebrated as everyman, and put on a pedestal (like Joe Sixpack or Sarah Palin).

A modern parallel to the Prince of Cranks, juxtaposed in the book, might be Karl Rove, whose entire career has been built on spin. No college degree. No military service. No experience. No problem in a nation where everyone can be an expert, regardless of expertise. As a possibly pertinent example, the headmaster of my high school did a routine segment on kids health and study habits on the local news as "Dr. Ralph". His doctorate was in French Grammar, which was never discussed in local NC TV, not as one might infer from the show: pediatrician, or psychology, or education. A doctor is a doctor is a doctor these days.

A Bush White House Strategist in 2004, rumored to be Rove himself, talked about a reporter as a member of the "reality-based community... the kind of people who believe that solutions emerge from judicious study of discernable reality... That's not the way the world works anymore."

These are the Three Great Premises (as Pierce outlines them) of the neoconservative right-wing populism, "anti-elitist" distrust of expertise, and are echoed heavily in Colbert's nightly satire:

- 1- Any theory is valid if it moves units.
- 2- Anything can be true if somebody says it loudly enough.
- 3- Fact is that which enough people believe. Truth is measured by how fervently they believe it.

In an experience that I have found com-

mon as well, Pierce relates the story of Prof. Hodges, an MIT alum: "If I go to India, and I tell them from MIT, it's a big deal. If I go to Thailand, it's a big deal. In Iowa, they couldn't give a rats ass." Ditto in my hometown (in small town North Carolina). MIT is recognized outside Chapel Hill as often as it is confused with IIT Tech (and people politely ask if I'm going into electrical or refrigerator engineering.)

Pierce's point, not as cynical as one might expect, is that America is a place "that is easy to love because you can take it on faith that... there is among your fellow citizens a vast exaltation of opinions that test the outer boundaries of the Crazyoid".

He values the contribution that crazy people have to make to our society, noting that conspiracy theories are only matched in their level of implausibility as some of the more sordid details of revealed, real-life, conspiracies. "We should always listen to our inner Donnellys. But we shouldn't always take their advice" he writes.

Or, to put it another way, "There is nothing wrong with a country that has people who put saddles on their dinosaurs. It's a wonderful show and we should watch them and applaud. We have no obligation to climb aboard and ride."

Needless to say, I agree with the author's main point, and found his general presentation enjoyable. As with many an insecure newspaperman, he vilifies other media overmuch (that darned talk-radio and TV!). Additionally, I think he sticks to overly political points (Terry Schiavo? Really?), possibly for the sake of connection or out of his personal experience. The bigger problems for Idiot America don't come from our lack of ability to govern ourselves without idiocy (have we ever?). The acceptance of craziness into the mainstream is part of the danger we accept in a democracy. America is not the only nation with craziness, and I wish Pierce had spent more time on what we can learn from how other countries, today, deal with their idiotic cranks.

We don't know what to do with all of ours, and we've got plenty to spare.



## The Hangover

by Deboki Chakravarti

Part of the stack included us pushing a car that was parked in front of Annenberg to the gym. When we got there, we were told that we had committed a crime the night before and had to destroy the car to hide the evidence using sledgehammers and pick-axes. I don't think any of us believed that we were actually going to get to destroy a car, but the alums assured us that this was exactly what we were going to get to do. We found out that removing the doors is one of the most challenging things, but I guess that's reassuring.

After lunch, we were told to go to Pasadena City Hall. When we got there, we found the seniors who were in charge of the stack with Bill Bogaard, the mayor of Pasadena. He told us that two of the people in our group had gotten married in the excitement of the previous night and provided us with compelling photographic evidence (their faces photoshopped onto the bodies of two people who had just gotten married). He also hinted that the newlyweds had discussed a Hollywood honeymoon, so we were sent off to Hollywood to find the rest of our clues.

## Super Mario Brothers

by Mario Zubia

I was able to defend my name and join the Mario team! Throughout the day, our team had to collect and assemble gold pieces to get a new clue, decipher hidden, pixelated messages after completing a sudoku and a large puzzle, help lead "Peach and Luigi" (a marble) through a huge PVC pipe maze, guide a robot through a crowded room, create a LEGO monster truck, and find clues dispersed throughout the campus.

The highlight of the day was probably when we played Super Mario. Except, this was not your ordinary video game. The controller was about the size of a desk and had four huge buttons. Each member on our team had to control a button (left, right, jump, spin jump) and lead Super Mario through the different levels. Our task was simple: get the high score. After several failed attempts, we began to get the hang of it and soon began to dominate.

Finally, after a day of running around campus, we ended with a fun game of capture the "Peach." All in all, it was a great stack that made my first Ditch Day a great experience!



## Ratatouille

by Sarah Marzen

Unlike the other Houses, Avery has no set dinner time, but this changed the day before Ditch Day. For the first time ever, Avery had Ditch Day announcements, in which seniors told stories about the other people in the House. The next morning, alumni from Avery's first rotating class helped the hard-working seniors pull out all the stops for Avery's four stacks. I was on the "Ratatouille" stack, which pitted Remy, the cook, against Emile, the gluttonous brother, in a series of random challenges. For example, the challenge that was featured in the news this year was a rafting challenge-- we built rafts out of duct tape and beach balls and pirate hats, and then swam relay races across the gene pool. (The pirate hats were used for splashing water at our opponents, not for enhancing the structural integrity of the rafts.) Somewhat in character,



## Legends of Zelda

The Legends of Zelda stack was sort of what it sounds like. We started out wearing tunics (a green shirt), and then we armed ourselves. We painted shields and found a wooden sword; then we fought with the swords, went to each of eight temples, which were random places on campus. At each temple, we got an item (e.g., hammer, smoke bombs, coins, chain, bow and arrow.) For example, we smashed open a bottle to get a key at one of these temples. We actually spent a long time looking for the key because it fell out of the bottle, and we almost lost someone's mail key. As another example, we had to open a chained chest under water with a knife. Our final task involved shooting an evil guy with a bow and arrow through a torch, "like in the game."

## MythBusters

by Alex Atsushi Takeda

One of the parts involved playing around with a microwave to see what would explode and what wouldn't when microwaved. Besides the classic "CD toasting" experiment, we learned some pretty cool ways to make plasma with microwaves. One of them used only grapes cut in half, which somehow heat up and generate sparkles. The other involved a bowl, a candle and a toothpick. By placing the toothpick over the candle and covering them with the bowl, the microwaves heat up the lit toothpick, making it glow. At last, we had free time to test anything we wanted. It turns out that pressurized cans didn't explode, they just started expelling their content.

## Portal

by Jenny Xiong

During this year's Ditch Day, I participated in "Portal - The Stack," based on the popular computer game. A group of us were put to the test by Aperture Science Laboratories through a series of puzzles and activities. Our ability to solve word searches in 3-D was tested at the Aperture Science - Homocentric Octothorpe (or AS-HO for short). The Aperture Science - School Wide Unidentified Portal Sighting (AS-SWUPS) sent us running through "portals" around campus in search of clues. The Aperture Science - Hole Alignment Test (AS-HAT) demanded team work and skill as we attempted to fit one pipe into another to retrieve a color code. Things got wet and must at the Aperture Science - Aqueous Information Delivery System (AS-AIDS) as we attempted to retrieve a clue through the exchange of fluids. And at the Aperture Science - Ballistic Item Target Collision Hub (AS-BITCH), our ability to aim and fire earned us the clue to our next task. These were just some of our cleverly named tasks. The day ended with our final clue scattered across the sides of a massive 7 foot cube, leading us to the location of our reward - cake!



## Alice in Wonderland

by Rachel Moore

For the Alice in Wonderland stack, we started by finding and following the White Rabbit (a senior dressed up in a ridiculous rabbit costume blowing a trumpet). After catching up to our hilarious-looking friend on the roof, we made our way up to the roof and followed him down the stairs to the North House Basement. Because of the way the stairs were decorated, it seemed like we were falling down a rabbit hole. After a few more tasks, like playing human bowling on a Slip-n-Slide, we headed to Tom Mannion's house for a "tea party," where we wore crazy hats and drank from crazy straws. After a few more tasks, we played croquet using (plastic) flamingoes and (dog toy) hedgehogs. As our last real challenge of the day, we dressed up as different suits of playing cards, and battled it out (in dodgeball). We finally managed to break into the seniors' rooms, where we found a piñata waiting for us as a prize.



## Lord of the Rings

by Kevin Sutherland



Participants in the "Lord of the Rings" stack tried to find rings using a carefully designed palantir, a crystal ball-like device that opened when the participants reached the next destination. The stack involved climbing a 12 foot wall of ice (about 1600 pounds of ice) and busting through a wooden barricade in the tunnels with an ax. One activity had participants wandering through an underground maze in Munth, Blacker's off-campus house, using only one beam of light that participants had to direct through the maze using mirrors. Another activity saw participants using knives to cut ropes tied to cinder blocks in the Del Mar pool; the next clue was in the cinder block. The wall of ice made its way onto several news channels.

## Ocean's 14

by Krissy Dahl

When we signed up, we split into Danny Ocean's team and Rusty's team; then within each of those, we had 4 "retrieval" specialists (the brute force team) and 3 intelligence specialists (the finesse team). I was on the retrieval squad, so our first task (after donning black t-shirts and sunglasses for intimidation's sake) was to take crowbars to Danny Ocean's apartment at 150 Chester and break into his room. We tore down the door and found two iPhones sitting on the counter- one for each squad.

We then met up with our intelligence experts, who had been solving puzzles to retrieve files on various comms. Once we were all together again, we looked in the iPhones' maps app-- and found out we were going to Vegas!!

On the car ride there, we had various puzzles to solve-- the intelligence teams had intercepted some encrypted emails and attachments, and it was our job to decode them and match criminals to the casinos we could find them in. My favorite were the messages hidden in photo attachments- I had to photoshop pictures on top of one another and mess with the contrast to reveal secret messages!

Once in Vegas, we went down the strip to 6 casinos; in each one, we had to find the con-man and interrogate him to get a piece of the password to a video file. It was my first trip to Vegas (or anywhere west of the Mississippi besides Caltech), so walking down the strip was amazing! In the end, we found all of the criminals, decoded the video, intercepted a drop and picked up the bag--which had hotel keys in it for us to spend the night in Vegas!

In the morning, we got to go to Chuck E. Cheese where we had to get 800 tickets in an hour with the tokens they gave us to win a secret mystery prize. After that we went to Eaton Canyon where we had to pull a huge crate to the top of a bridge using a rope hung over the bridge. All the people walking by just told us to give up because it was just full of rocks... what they didn't know there was actually a clue in the crate that we had to get. Afterward, we hiked around the canyon to the waterfall where we had lunch and relax for a little while.

Towards the end of our stack, we had to split into three groups of four to go to different locations, but gradually the groups were "kid-

## Home Alone

by Stephany Lai

napped" and locked into different rooms in Lloyd and other houses. Each room had clues that would tell you the combo to another pair's room, as well as a webcam system set up so you could communicate with the other captured people and help each other. One person was even locked in someone's closet. My partner and I didn't get locked anywhere, and instead we were the ones who actually had to go rescue everyone. It was really cool seeing how all of the kidnappings and clues in the rooms came together in the end... it was definitely one of the coolest parts of the stack!

## The Amazing Race: Los Angeles

Our day began with breakfast. The seniors had cleverly hidden clues to the race's starting line inside homemade muffins. At the starting line, we played connect four by throwing darts at grids of balloons. However, it wasn't until after lunch that the real "race" kicked in. We got clues that had us doing Karaoke in a club in Little Tokyo, taking pictures of Hollywood stars, running up the hill to Universal Studios, and buying trinkets in Chinatown. My team beat the others to every checkpoint, but the others kept catching up with us while we were waiting for the next train. We ended the day with one last metro ride--on the Dodger stadium express--to watch the Dodgers crush the Tigers from the top deck behind home plate.

by Theresa Geiger



Those of you who watched Harold and Kumar: Escape from Guantanamo Bay last year courtesy of ASCIT will remember perhaps not so much a brilliant plot, but the multiple scenes of general debauchery. After glancing at the introductory pictures surrounding the sign up sheet - namely, a Kumar with his own makeshift bong, a bottomless party and a Harold waking up to a one-eyed inbred female - I put down my name, not really sure what awaited me at 8:30am. We donned our orange "prison" T-shirts and one of our first tasks was to break out of prison by solving a three-number combination code written by our EE senior, Brian Yu, who spent two weeks on the program. Next we went to the gene pool and found two huge pool tubes tied with strings to one end of the pool and we had to use them to escape from Cuba to Miami. The seniors told us sabotage was allowed between the two teams so it quickly became an all-out gene pool fight. That definitely was the chilliest part of our stack and it felt like we were not at Tech just enjoying a day at the pool. The rest of the day consisted of mixing a layered drink, a dance-off, repelling off the CSS building, and a stilts-relay race.

Harold & Kumar: Escape from Guantanamo Bay  
by Gloria Tran

ASCIT Board of Directors Meeting – Minutes  
May 17, 2010

Officers Present: Adam Khan, Brian Merlob, Addie Rice, Prakriti Gaba, Karthik Sarma, Chris Hallacy, Tim Black  
Call to order: 2:10 pm

President's report:

- ASCIT Orientation Event: Adam is figuring out ideas to introduce new students to ASCIT when they first arrive on campus.
- Mental Health Survey: The Health Center is sending out a survey, which they would like most of the campus to fill out. Tom will be throwing a dinner for the house that fills in the most surveys.
- Pre-med Advisory committees: Adam and Karthik have proposed setting up pre-med Advisory Committees, where pre-med students can get direct help and advising while going through the medical school application process. They suggest that we appeal to alumni that are doctors, etc. for such advising.
- Concert: Adam has been talking to Tom about arranging the Super Mash Bros Concert, and he's thinking of perhaps inviting students from PCC as well.
- Big Interhouse: In order to get ready for big interhouse, Adam wants to make sure we know which houses will be contributing and working together for the event in November.

Officer Reports:

- V.P. of Academic Affairs (ARC Chair): ARC is working on staff/teaching awards based on nominations. The awards banquet will take place in June. ASCIT voted in favor of the ARC nominations. (6-0-0)
- V.P. of Nonacademic Affairs (IHC Chair): The IHC would like to challenge BoD in athletic events. On a different note, the IHC is conducting committee interviews and revising rotation rules.
- Operations Director: Merlob is interested in conducting a Myers-Briggs test on all frosh. He thinks that this might be a way in which professors could learn the best learning style of students and hopefully teach to their needs. Talk is still going on about this proposal.
- Treasurer: Hallacy still needs pre-frosh weekend checks from some houses. He has emailed all house presidents about this. Hallacy is still working on re-issuing checks that weren't given last year. Avery/Ruddock had multi-house event this week. He's planning on putting treasurer assistants in charge of club funding. This will entail tasks like writing payment requests, etc., which Hallacy ultimately signs off.
- Social director: The ASCIT movie took place this week and was a great success, approximately 500 students came out for the event.

Discussion:

- Dev Team application: ASCIT voted and approves Daniel Erenrich to be on Dev Team (6-0-0)
- Boxes for moving out: Classically, seniors have to pay for boxes to move out; however, like last year, ASCIT wants to make this process a bit easier by buying boxes which would facilitate moving.
- ASCIT resolutions: This topic has been tabled until the next ASCIT meeting.

Scheduling:

- Coffee House Manager interview meeting: will take place on Wednesday at 10:15 pm.
- Midnight Donuts: will take place on tentatively Wednesday May 26th.

Meeting adjourned: 3:06 pm  
Submitted by Prakriti Gaba  
ASCIT Secretary

## Future of Big T distribution uncertain

*Continued from Page 1*

to receiving yearbooks from all of my years at Caltech, and I am disappointed by the current proposal," said senior Daryl Coleman. "While it is obviously not fair, and uses my class's money over the last four years to make up for lost advertising, I understand why this decision has been made."

ASCIT has contemplated different solutions to the problem in future years. "One method to fund Big T is procuring ads," said Merlob, "there's a business manager for the Big T." Khan states that another possible solution is to increase the current \$36 fees in future years.

Although the current crisis of money shortage seems daunting, the Bylaws that dictate \$36 Big T money per student haven't been changed for decades. "Maybe they

had better advertising," said Merlob, speculating on how the years prior to 2007 were able to successfully print the Big T using only student dues. Khan suggests that inflation may have driven up the price of printing, making it no longer able to be paid by student fees.

"The important thing is that there will be yearbooks that will come out, but don't know if underclassmen have to pay extra to get them," said Khan.

The Big T features eight pages per House, and covers sports, organization, and special events such as Third Eye Blind concert and Prefrosh weekend activities.

The 2009-2010 school year Big T will be distributed in September, so that "events at the end of the school year such as graduation and concerts will be included in the yearbook," said Bonnie Zhang, co-editor of the Big T.

## Caltech Professor Leadbetter offers thoughts on BP oil spill

### *Doubts longevity of environment concerns*

*Continued from Page 1*

ing animals living there. And if the Corexit in the oceans catches fire, it is likely to release toxic sulfonic acids into the air, causing even more pollution.

Now scientists are anxiously biting their nails watching the gulf currents pick up. Currently, the spill is a 150-mile swath, from Dauphin Island, Alabama to Grand Isle, Louisiana. Chances are, droplets of oil will be carried up to the Florida keys and maybe even South to pollute those beautiful Central American vacation getaways

Responsibility for the BP oil spill has shifted from agency to agency, as the government has angrily pointed fingers. Leadbetter

sees are more fundamental cause of the problem. We, the people of USA, are "giving mixed signals to the government." On the one hand we want cheap oil and panic and complain each time we spend an extra penny at the pump. On the other hand, we want clean, green energy to minimize environmental pollution. The two are not compatible since safety and protection requires a monetary investment. If the proper precautions are not taken, then accidents like the BP oil spill can happen.

So far, America's leaders are taking precautions to prevent further environmental damage. Obama has ordered a temporary moratorium on offshore drilling in new areas. Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger withdrew his

support of a plan to expand oil drilling off California's coast saying that the accident has greatly increased safety concerns. However Dr. Leadbetter remains skeptical. He notices that people get scared and angry but their anger is not directed toward long term changes. "Will we be tolerating the political unrest when gas goes up to \$10.50 a gallon?" he asks. At the moment we have no particle alternatives for oil since solar panels are expensive, people are unwilling to put up with windmills blocking their view and nuclear energy research was truncated after the tragic incident at three mile island thirty years ago. So perhaps the ban on offshore drilling will not be in place for long.

# Caltech Honors Men's Basketball Players

On Saturday, two men's basketball players were honored at Caltech's All-Sports Award Show, an annual event that recognizes the accomplishments of student-athletes on campus.

Mike Edwards, a 6-foot-7 wing from Canyon Country, was named Freshman Male Athlete of the Year. Edwards, who copped SCIAC Athlete of the Week honors in January, averaged 18.8 points and 1.8 steals per game during the 2009-10 campaign. He set Caltech program records in six different categories, including 3-pointers made in a season (62) and 3-pointers made in a game (7). With his scoring and thievery prowess, he entered the program's Top 10 for points (470, just 10 off the record) and steals in a season (44). Edwards, who also ranks among the program's best in free throw percentage for a season (.777), was a conference contender in several categories (No. 2 in points, No. 8 in free throw percentage, No. 2 in 3-point makes per game, No. 15 in 3-point percentage, No. 2 in steals, No. 11 in blocked shots, and No. 3 in minutes played). He scored 21+ points 10 times as a frosh, including a career-high 32 at Redlands.

Ryan Elmquist, a 6-foot-5 junior forward from Woodbury, MN, was named Most Outstanding Male Athlete of the Year. Elmquist led the SCIAC in blocked shots and broke the Caltech record for swats in a season with 50, a mark previously held by 6-foot-10 center Ben Turk '98. Elmquist, who finished No. 38 in the nation in blocked shots, was also among the conference's leaders in points (12.8 ppg), rebounds (5.9 rpg), and minutes played (33.5 mpg), No. 13, No. 10, and No. 5 respectively. Elmquist, a team captain and SAAC representative, was also named to the SCIAC All-Academic Team and awarded the program's prestigious Vesper Trophy for 2009-10, the latter an honor bestowed upon him in back-to-back seasons. This year, he scored a season-high 25 points against Santa Cruz, recorded three double-doubles, and tied a career-high with five blocked shots against Chapman. Elmquist was named Caltech Freshman Male Athlete of the Year in 2007-08.

-- taken from Caltech Athletics

*You can tell that our sports editor forgot to show up again...*



Endangered Beaver! In need of saving! Come to our meeting to help the cause.

## THE CALIFORNIA TECH

*would love to have more writers, since we're so great!*

**NOON, Tuesdays**

*Come to the Tech Meeting at Table in Front of the Bookstore ; free cultural foods, stories, and ideas*

**Write and/or take pictures when you can. We pay up to \$30 for news articles.**

*Send [tech@caltech.edu](mailto:tech@caltech.edu) an email if you're interested in being a part of the Tech or would like to contribute opinion stories*

## Dear Dr. Smart,

Dear Dr. Smart,

I have an idea for an article but I am not sure if I should publish it because it might offend people. What should I do?

Love, Dr. Smart

Dear Dr. Smart,

You probably shouldn't. Some people just can't take a joke. You don't want to get yelled at, do you?

Yours truly, Dr. Smart

...

Dear Dr. Smart,

According to the Daily Beast, Caltech is the 8th happiest college in America. Last week I went to bed at 4 AM every night because of problem sets and midterms. I dread getting out of bed each morning because once I do I have to continue working. I don't feel happy. What's my problem?

Sincerely, Romo-Goth

Dear Pessimistic Moron,

Your problem is you're a pessimistic moron. You're such a downer. You're the kind of guy who, upon realizing you're being hunted by a smoking hot cougar, refuses to accept how awesomely sexy your situation is, instead worrying about whether your peers would think it's an inappropriate relationship. She's a cougar for crying out loud, and a hot one at that! Who do you think you are turning a lovely woman down from sexing your brain out just because she's a decade or two older than you? You probably hole yourself up in your room all day and night only so you can complain that you're not having fun. Maybe if you got outside and soaked in some rays, you'd be much happier. Look at it this way: you're in your prime, spending the best years of your life in the most beautiful part of the United States, doing some of the best science in the world. Cheer the hell up! And if a sexy older lady comes knocking at your door, you better open it and give her what she wants. Make the most of it, or you'll live to regret it.

...

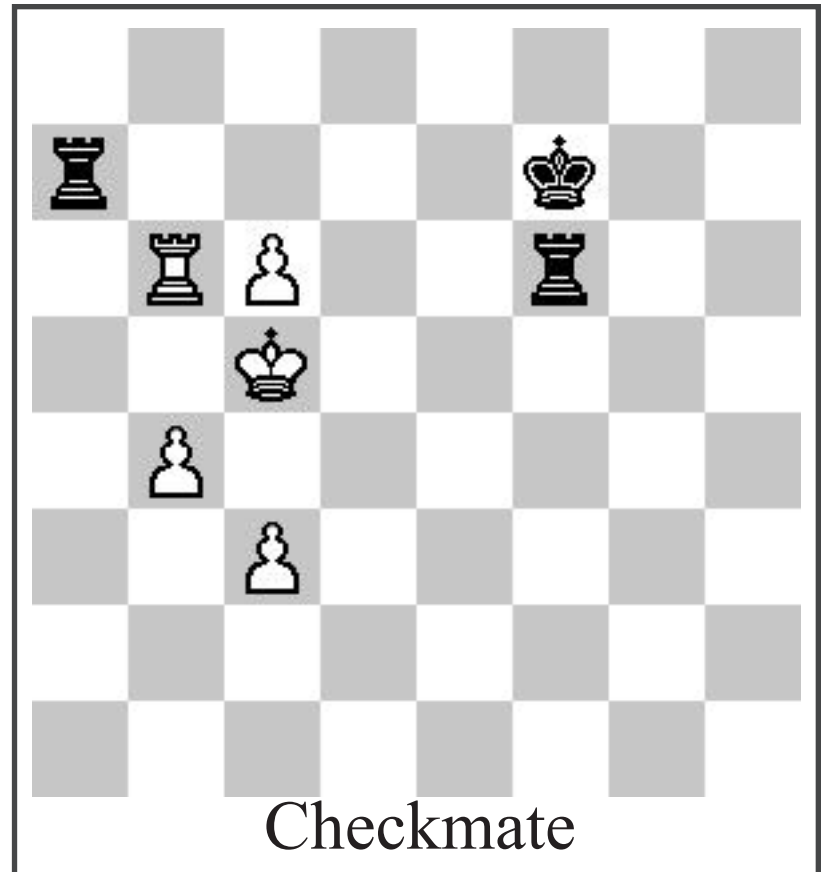
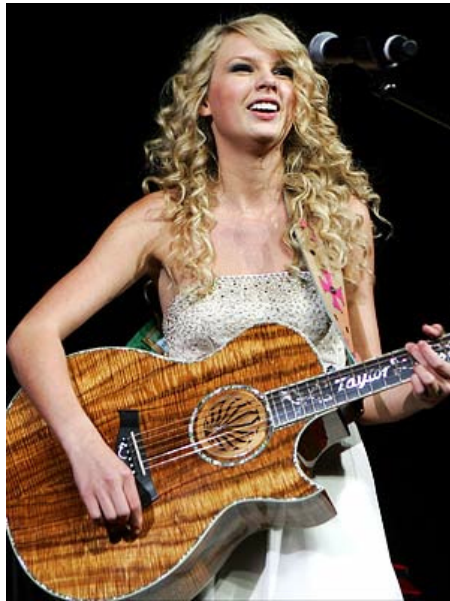
Dear Dr. Smart,

I got this new girlfriend, and she's pretty hot. Problem is she likes country music. Is she worth the trouble?

Dear Trouble,

Probably not. I am sure you are aware of the hot-crazy scale. If this girl is sufficiently hot, she will make up for her craziness. Now, this girl likes country. Let's be honest here, country music is awful. If she's got that sort of taste, she must be pretty crazy. I hope for your sake she can be a part-time model, because that's the least it would take for you to stomach Carrie Underwood songs. And understand that you're at Caltech. Odds are she's, at best, like your neighborhood's comely librarian and not a supermodel. If she were Caltech physics student Talulah Riley it would be a different story, but if your girl is an ordinary teacher, you're playing a risky game. But hey, don't take my word for it. Next time you take her out, go in your friend's pickup truck and see how she reacts. Over dinner, casually mention your uncle's gun collection. You might find out more than you wanted to know.

Love,  
Dr. Smart



## How the Humor Page gets written

by James Wu

1. The writer goes to the bathroom

Oh man, that burrito did not go down well.

2. The writer gets a great idea

Woah, you know what would be really funny?

3. The idea is hurriedly jotted down on a portable device

I can wash my hands afterwards

4. It finally gets written up Sunday night

Hmm this actually doesn't seem that funny now that I no longer have hemorrhoids.

5. The editors realize there's still blank space on the page

Let's widen the margins and use bigger font. Bigger. Bigger. Bigger. Perfect.

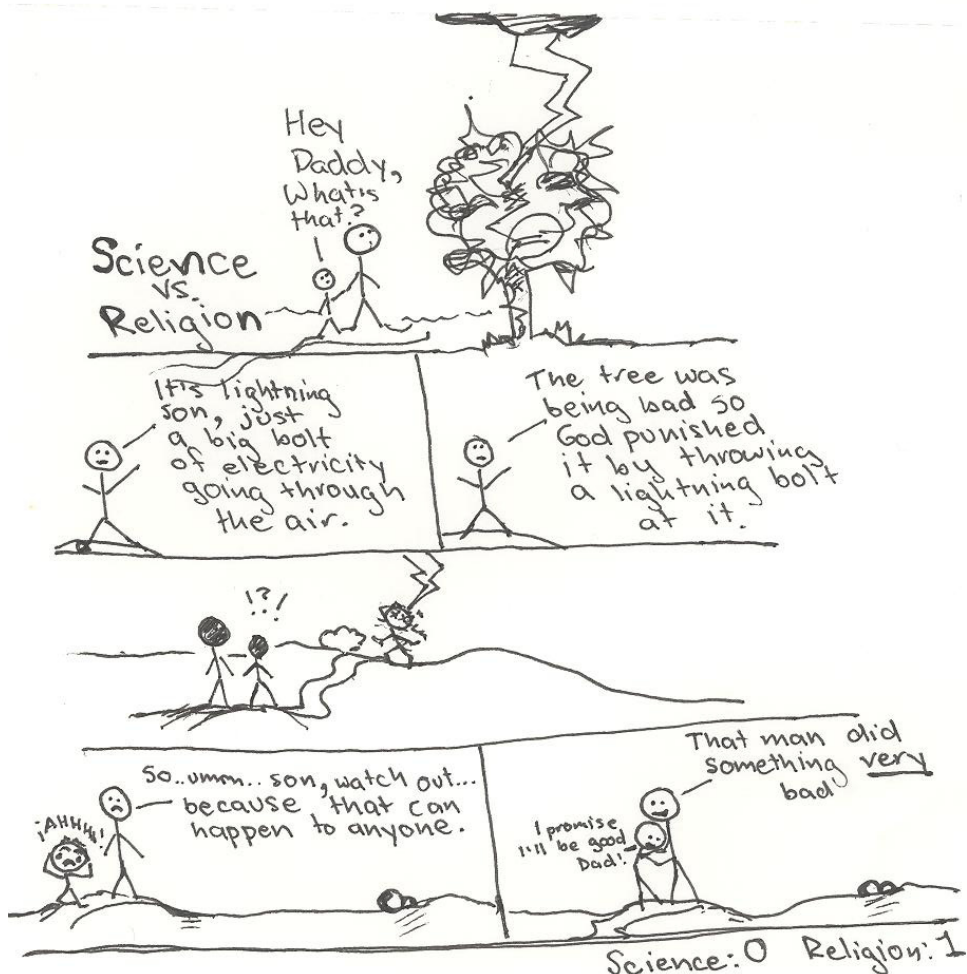
6. xkcd swoops in to save the day

If only we had someone to draw stick figures, we wouldn't have to plagiarize...

The Punchline?

You're filling your mind with what's produced on a toilet!

The California  
Tech  
Caltech 40-58  
Pasadena, CA 91125



## Science VS Religion

by Sasha Souverneva